538 audiences as well as to emphasize the "heroic" qualities of the leading protagonist, a Communist cadre. The portrayal of the Party cadre P'eng Kang in the play was deemed incorrect, "for the Party's leadership is invariably collective, but in the play, P'eng seems to be quite alone." The play was thus rated "of low educational value." The author of the story, "Old Worker Ku Fu-shan," was reprimanded because he "not only distorts the image of a model Party member but also completely ignores the function of Party training and leadership."

546 The classic example of Communist literary and artistic criticism involves the 1951 Shanghai-produced film, "Wu Hsün Chuan," based on the life story of a famous advocate of free education who lived in Shantung Province. Wu Hsün was born into a poor family and was thus deprived of formal education. In order to help children to attend schools, he dedicated himself to hard work and frugal living; and by shrewd investment of his savings, he succeeded in accumulating funds for the education of the poor. Wu Hsün's contribution to Chinese education was never questioned until the Communist critics attacked the film. Wu's effort for the kind of education prevalent at his time, according to the Communist critics, only strengthened the feudal order and arrested the forces of progress; rather than serving as an "accomplice" of the Manchu ruling order, the critics said, Wu should have joined the revolutionary

• 546 force, i.e., the Taiping revolutionaries. Furthermore, they said, Wu Hsün's means of accumulating wealth was indicative of his subservience to the rich and of his exploitation of the poor.[6]

The evolution of criticism of the film "Wu Hsün Chuan" is illustrative of the nature of Communist literary and artistic criticism. Adverse opinions toward the film were not initiated by literary and art circles, but by the Central Committee of the Communist Party. In fact, the film was till then very enthusiastically received, even by many eminent Communists. On May 20, 1951, the Peking People's Daily, an organ of the Central Committee of the Party, published an editorial alluding to this state of affairs. "Some comrades say that they have already mastered Marxism, but when confronted with concrete issues, they completely lose their critical sense." The "Party Life" column of the same issue ordered all Communists to join in criticism of "Wu Hsün Chuan." On June 4, a directive of the Ministry of Education of the People's Government, published in the People's Daily, instructed all the educational personnel in the nation to carry out discussions of the film. On August 4, the final and definitive verdict on the film was delivered by Chou Yang, the Vice-minister of Cultural Affairs of the Communist Government. He labeled the film as unrealistic

6. Ai Ch'ing, "Oppose the Slave Ideology of Wu Hsün," People's Literature, VI, 2, June 1, 1951, pp. 9-10.

546 art and a product of anti-historical and anti-popular ideology.[7] Party organs in all parts of China where "Wu Hsün Chuan" had been shown used the film as a target for ideological propaganda. The ideology of the film was also discussed at the third session of the first National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, which met from October 23 to November 1, 1951. Members of the All-China Federation of the Literary and Art Circles began to echo the view of the Central Committee of the Party and confessed that, while they had made definite progress in the past two years, nevertheless they always fell behind the development of Chinese society. This confession led the writers to "plunge" into study in an effort to "remold their ideology and to sharpen their critical senses."

538 This conflict between critical and creative forces also manifests itself in the bulk of the incongruous writings of the literary critics in Communist China. The critics has ready an abundance of clichés, jargon, and theories of socialist realism, but they are clearly ill-digested and are used with little discrimination or literary skill. Quotations from Marx, Lenin, Stalin, Gorky, Zhadanov are frequent but are

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7. Current Background, Hong Kong, Amercian Consulate General, No. 113, Sept. 1, 1951.

536 field of recreation. Lao She's play Lung-hsü Kou which was long awaited, and which describes the workers of Peking in improving the sanitation of their living quarters behind the Temple of Heaven, is considerably better written than most recent plays.

5. Motion Pictures

546 While Peking decides the policy, Shanghai and Mukden are now the centers of China's motion picture industry. The White-haired Girl, a film based on the opera, won the first prize among the thirty-eight entries at the Communist International Motion-picture Festival in Czechoslovakia in 1951. The Concentration Camp at Shang-jao, which was made in 1951, describes the life of the "patriotic people" in the Kuomintang concentration camp, and, according to the Communist reviewers, successfully "demonstrates the collective heroism" of the Communists under duress, When the rural production drive was about to begin in 1954, the film Good Harvest was timed to be shown to the peasants during the festivities of the lunar New Year in order to emphasize the importance of increasing the output of the land. The People on the Grassland is a movie about the Mongols in Inner Mongolia. Sound tracks in the Mogol and Uigur languages have been made so that this picture may be circulated among the ethnic minorities.

208 spoken drama, music, folk songs, and folk
533 dancing for purposes of propaganda should be
535 mentioned. These devices, nominally planned for amusement or relaxation, are now permeated with Communist ideas and symbols. As well as the professional dramatic groups, ballad teams, and symphony orchestras in Peking and Tientsin, there are many government-organized "cultural and artistic troupes", consisting of thousands of dramatists, dancers, musicians, and singers. These troupes travel everywhere, performing in villages, mining districts, and industrial plants. Programs presented by these troupes are usually designed to enlist popular support for certain current policies of the regime.

J. Motion Pictures as a Medium for Propaganda

208 The Chinese Communists recognized
546 motion pictures as a powerful weapon of propaganda long before the North China Region came under their control. But their utilization of motion pictures as a propaganda medium did not begin until they captured Peking and Tientsin in 1949. The Communists took immediate measures to prohibit the showing of films with ideological content contradictory to the spirit and provisions of the "Common Program of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference" -- a document containing the basic policies of the regime. Meanwhile, they assumed

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control of the film studio in Peking, which had been left intact by the Kuomintang regime. Through the combined effort of the film studio in Peking and two others, one in Shanghai and another in Mukden, the Communists were shortly able to turn out films portraying the "new life of the Chinese people," glorifying the new regime and condemning "reactionary activities and ideologies." Meanwhile, the Communist regime continues to import Soviet films and films produced by Communist satellite countries.

Cinema theaters in the North China Region are located in large and medium-sized cities. Mobile teams have been organized to provide film showings for people in small towns and rural districts, especially at workers' clubs and reading rooms. The use of clubs and reading rooms for the showing of motion pictures has its particular advantage for the Communist Party, for it greatly facilitates the effort to integrate films with other propaganda and agitation efforts. Frequently film showings will be followed by the appearance of a local Communist agitator who "clarifies" the film's content. As it is in the Soviet Union, a good film with ideological content is a powerful instrument in the hands of an experienced propagandist. On the other hand, people who prefer not to have propaganda mingled with their pleasures may be led to avoid such programs.